

State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor



Department of Employment Security

Brenda A. Russell, Director

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KIDS

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Kids and Careers:

How Families Can Help Youth Succeed

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT = STUDENT SUCCESS

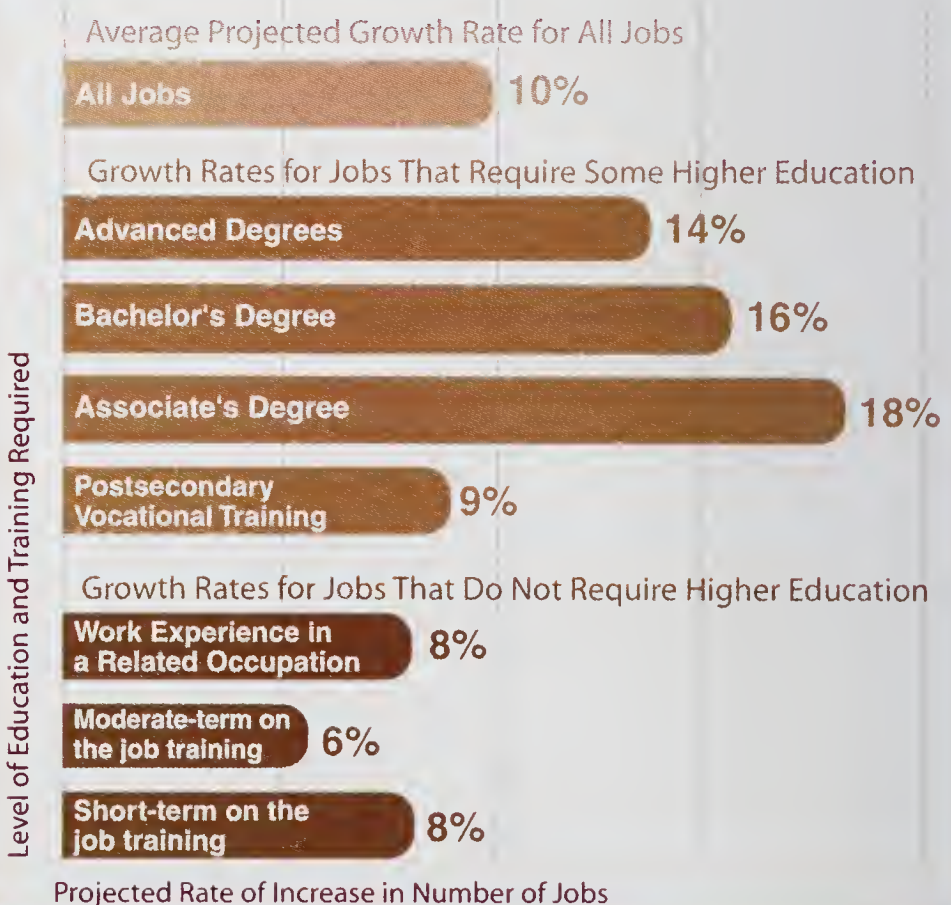
You are your child's first and best role model. After all, he or she is always watching you and listening to what you say about the world of work. You set the tone for success by encouraging your child's interests and goals. Discuss your own experience and what you've liked and disliked about your employment. Find "teachable moments" such as talking about the jobs you see on screen as you watch television together.

One way to help children make decisions is by giving good, solid information. This brochure offers some ideas and Web sites that your child may find useful when deciding on a direction in life. Studies show that a clear goal and a plan to reach it keeps kids more motivated and less likely to drop out of school - and a high school diploma is needed for almost every job. Additional training and education in an area that matches your child's interests will open the door to all possible future opportunities.

A career plan will not lock students into a single path. With global competition and rapidly changing technology, workers will need to re-evaluate and continue training throughout their lifetime. Doing well in school will keep all options open.

Families now have a resource to help their children explore careers. The Illinois Department of Employment Security provides "Career Resources" for elementary, middle, junior, high school and beyond at www.ILWorkInfo.com/icrn. This Web site is available to all Illinois citizens at no charge. You and your child can find answers to questions.

Jobs That Require Higher Education Are Growing Faster Than Those That Require Less Education



THREE EASY STEPS TO A CAREER PLAN

STEP ONE: EXPLORE INTERESTS

Talk to your children about their interests. Which classes are most enjoyable? How do they spend their own time and money? Are there any skills or passions you've noticed in them from an early age? During the exploration phase, encourage looking into any and all careers that seem like fun because students can narrow them down later. One tool for learning about their interests is a survey at countdown.ILWorkInfo.com.

STEP TWO: FIND CAREERS THAT MATCH

Once students know about their interests they can see which careers match them. The Illinois Career Resource Network (ICRN) at www.ILWorkInfo.com/icrn has thousands of careers listed in Countdown, Career Click and the Career Information System (CIS). They cover how much each pays, how to prepare, working conditions and much more.

Encourage children to talk to you, other family members, teachers, counselors, community leaders and friends about their interests and how they arrived at where they are in life. These contacts can help students locate people who work in the fields they think they would like to enter. That can be a good reality check, and a way to find internships, summer jobs and even employment. These adults may let students shadow them to see what a typical day on the job is like.

STEP THREE: DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION

Students need facts about the education and training required for their chosen occupations. Their school guidance counselor can help them develop plans and take the right courses to reach their goals. If they are going beyond high school, counselors can provide information on schools, colleges, financial aid and military training. Their progress can be tracked in "My CIS," the Portfolio and Course planner in CIS, click on it at www.ILWorkInfo.com/icrn.

IMPORTANT TARGETS FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

Middle School / Junior High:

- Begin exploring interests. Look at which activities students enjoy most and help them think about potential careers.
- Start learning about Internet career planning resources such as Countdown, Career Click and the Career Information System (CIS) at www.ILWorkInfo.com/icrn.

Freshman Year:

- Take career assessments to identify interests, skills, work values and personality preferences. Several assessment tools can be found in CIS.
- Set up a portfolio in CIS and use the Course Planner to keep track of requirements and related courses that support career directions.

Sophomore Year:

- Join organizations and volunteer in fields related to intended career goals.
- Schedule a time to take the PLAN test (a pre-ACT test) and the PSAT (a pre-SAT test) for the college bound.

Junior Year:

- Consider all opportunities including apprenticeship programs for skilled trades, military service, entrepreneurship and employment as well as college.
- Schedule the SAT and/or ACT for the fall of the junior year. Use the Test Prep section of CIS to prepare for them.
- Talk to guidance counselors for more information on schools and careers. They can be helpful in making sure all timelines are met.

Senior Year:

- Explore school-sponsored job shadowing or other ways to observe people on the job. Sign up for internships or other work experience programs.
- Generate a resume using the CIS portfolio section, "My Education and Work History." Learn about writing a college entrance essay in CIS' Illinois Schools in the FAQs.
- Check Financial Aid Sort in CIS if college bound, and apply for financial aid by January of the senior year.
- Use the Job Search section of CIS to fine tune cover letters, resumes and interviewing skills. The Employer Locator can help target where to apply for jobs.

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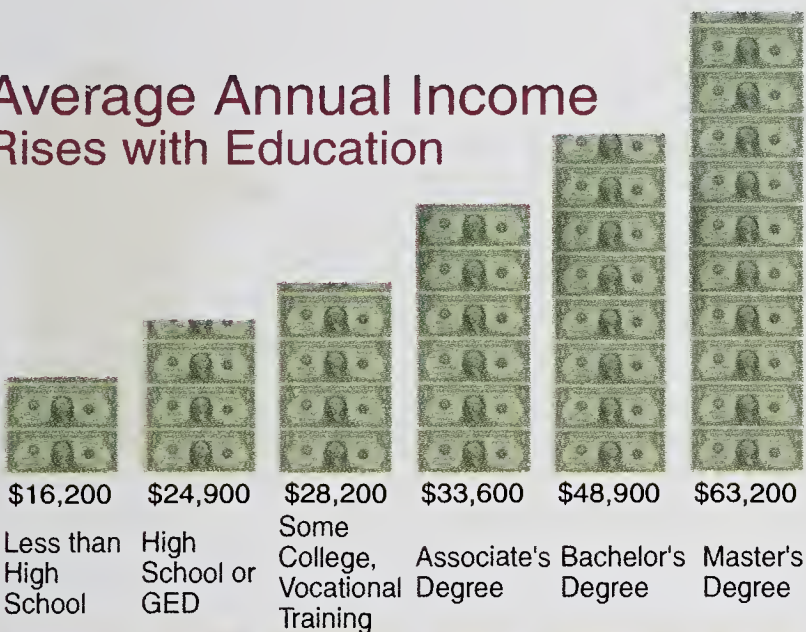
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BEST BET OCCUPATIONS

"Best Bet" occupations combine a high growth rate with a large number of annual openings. They also pay well for the level of training and education required. More Best Bet occupations can be viewed, in English and Spanish, by visiting imi.ides.state.il.us and clicking on Illinois Occupational Outlook in Brief. (Openings are thru 2014; wage data is for 2006.)

Occupational Title	Annual IL Openings	Avg. Annual Entry Wage
Work Experience + 4 Years of College or More		
Computer & Information System Managers	513	\$56,685
Pharmacists	509	\$67,014
4 Years of College (Bachelor's Degree)		
Accountants & Auditors	1,999	\$36,453
Computer Systems Analysts	1,001	\$52,520
2 Years College (Associate's Degree)		
Registered Nurses	4,024	\$38,778
Computer Support Specialists	660	\$28,445
Vocational Training After High School		
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	1,336	\$20,758
Licensed Practical Nurses	749	\$27,675
Long-Term On-The-Job Training		
Carpenters	1,394	\$30,330
Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Braziers	421	\$23,774
Moderate-Term On-The-Job Training		
Sales, Wholesale & Manufacturing	2,674	\$29,178
General Maintenance & Repair Workers	1,427	\$23,291
Short-Term On-The-Job Training		
Receptionists & Information Clerks	1,955	\$17,342
Truck Drivers, Light / Delivery	1,096	\$18,154

Average Annual Income Rises with Education



Unemployment Rate Drops with Education

OTHER RESOURCES

"What Else Is Out There That Can Help Us?"

There are many sites on the Internet about education, financial aid and career planning. Try the following free government and non-profit sites first:

www.ides.state.il.us The home page for the Illinois Department of Employment Security. It leads to **www.ILWorkInfo.com** - the One Source gateway page for the Workforce Information Center, Career Resources and LMI Source. I*COMPASS (**www.ides.state.il.us/icompass**) is a new e-learning tool to help navigate through One Source and access information.

www.ILWorkInfo.com/icrn The Illinois Career Resource Network has CIS, Career Click and Countdown with education and career information for junior high level through high school, college and adults. These tools help students figure out what they'd like to do and how to achieve their goals.

www.ides.state.il.us/ietc/map.asp Your local Illinois Employment and Training Center has a resource room with computers and career information for youth and adults.

www.collegezone.com College Zone is the Illinois Student Assistance Commission's site for financial aid with a user-friendly guide to scholarships, grants, work-study and more.

www.isbe.net The Illinois State Board of Education has information on learning standards, career and technical education (CTE) and more.

www.iccb.state.il.us The Illinois Community College Board coordinates and administers Tech Prep and adult education initiatives. The site links to community colleges in your area.

www.finaid.org Offers financial aid information with links to test preparation and internship opportunities, for students who want to earn as they learn.

Need More Information?

Send email to: des.icrn@illinois.gov

Call us at (217) 785-2647

or toll free: (877) 513-1987

IDES/ICRN

850 E. Madison, Third Floor
Springfield, IL 62702

CIS is brought to you by the
Illinois Career Resource Network of
the Illinois Department of Employment Security